

Message Text

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67

ACTION IO-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 INR-05 PRS-01 SP-02 L-01 AF-04 ARA-06 EA-06

EUR-08 NEA-07 /066 W

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R 261511Z FEB 76

FM USMISSION USUN NY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6027

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSH DAKAR

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMCONSUL TANGIER

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 0713

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SC, SW, SS, AG, SP

SUBJECT: SYG'S REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS ON SAHARA TRIP

1. AT SECURITY COUNCIL LUNCH FEBRUARY 25, SWEDISH PERM
REP AMBASSADOR RYDBECK SAID HE HAD FINISHED REPORT ON HIS
SAHARA MISSION AND EXPECTED IT TO BE AVAILABLE THURSDAY
OR FRIDAY. HE SEEMED INCLINED TO SYMPATHIZE WITH ALGERIAN
(OR POLISARIO) POINT OF VIEW, BUT PROFESSED TO BELIEVE
THAT IT IS NOW TOO LATE FOR ANY "EVEN APPROXIMATELY JUST
SOLUTION BASED ON SELF-DETERMINATION" TO BE ACHIEVED.

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2. RYDBECK SAID "LAST CHANCE" FOR SELF-DETERMINATION MAY HAVE PASSED BY TWO OR THREE YEARS AGO. AT THAT TIME FOWARD-LOOKING ACTION BY SPANISH GOVERNMENT MIGHT HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE. TODAY, HE BELIEVED, TRADITIONAL SAHARAN SOCIAL STRUCTURE HAS BEEN "IRRETRIEVABLY" DESTROYED. JEMAA IS "COMPLETELY DISPERSED. " SHAYKHS IN MOROCCAN/MAURITANIAN-OCCUPIED TOWNS COMPLAINED BITTERLY AND WITH APPARENT SINCERITY THAT ALGERIANS HAD SEDUCED AND TAKEN AWAY VIRTUALLY ENTIRE YOUNGER GENERATION. EL-AYUN WAS HALF-EMPTY, WITH POOR DISTRICTS VIRTUALLY DESERTED; ONLY WOMEN, CHILDREN, AND ELDERLY MEN WERE IN CITY. VILLA CISNEROS WAS VIRTUALLY DESERTED. SAMARA HAD PERHAPS ONE THOUSAND PEOPLE LEFT. RYDBECK RECONED THAT ABOUT FORTY THOUSAND PEOPLE, MORE THAN HALF OF ORIGINAL POPULATION, NOW RESIDE IN REFUGEE CAMPS IN EASTERN REGION AND IN ALGERIA. THERE WERE FEW YOUNG MEN OF MILITARY AGE AMONG THEM; THESE WERE PRESUMABLY WEARING "SOME UNIFORM OR OTHER" ELSEWHERE.

3. IN ADDITION TO POLITICAL AND MILITARY DISRUPTION, DROUGHT HAD TAKEN TERRIBLE TOLL. FOR EXAMPLE, CAMEL POPULATION OF ONE-HELF MILLION HAD BEEN REDUCED BY DROUGHT TO LESS THAN 100,000.

4. RYDBECK SEEMED TO THINK MOROCCAN-MAURITANIAN TAKE-OVER IS FAIT ACCOMPLI, NOT LIKELY TO BE REVERSED. PROBLEM FOR UN IS WHAT KIND OF GLOSS TO PUT ON THE DE FACTO SITUATION. SEVERAL TIMES HE EXPRESSED REGRET THAT MOROCCANS-MAURITANIANS HAD NOT "AT LEAST COVERED THEIR ACTIONS WITH SOME KIND OF "FIG LEAF." HE DID NOT MENTION ALGERIAN MILITARY PRESENCE, NOR ACKNOWLEDGE IT WHEN REFERRED TO BY OTHERS.

5. RYDBECK SAID HE KNEW OF NO PLANS FOR A REPRISE OF HIS MISSION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, SELFDETERMINATION, TRAVEL REPORTS, DROUGHTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976USUNN00713
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760073-0480
From: USUN NEW YORK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976027/aaaaagbg.tel
Line Count: 95
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <10 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SYG'S REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS ON SAHARA TRIP
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SC, SW, SS, AG, SP, (RYDBECK)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006